

the Pringle collections of 1890 and 1891, and has just published<sup>1</sup> some of his results. Nearly forty new species are described, the majority of which are *Compositæ*. Two new genera are proposed: *Coulterophytum*, a genus of umbellifers belonging to *Selineæ*; and *Geissolepis*, a genus of composites belonging to *Galinosogeæ*. We regret the omission of the index, which always made Dr. Watson's contributions so easy to use, and a thing which Dr. Gray never would provide.

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## OPEN LETTERS.

### The meeting at Madison in 1893.

No one need fear that there is not enthusiasm among the botanists of America. There is an unlimited supply of botanical enthusiasm in the air. The whole atmosphere is electric with it and the only problem is how to collect a little of this universal enthusiasm for the meeting at Madison. The meeting is the Leyden jar that must be charged from the general botanical atmosphere of the country. I have one practical suggestion to make and that is this: Let a plan be outlined for a complete exhibit at the Madison meeting of photographic views of the different botanical laboratories of the country. Let the gathering together of this exhibit be placed in the hands of some committee that will be willing to give some careful thought to the administrative detail of the whole matter and let it be advertised thoroughly so that the exhibit will be a complete one and a creditable one. To the "distinguished foreign guests" promised us by the GAZETTE such an exhibit would be peculiarly grateful and it would be a delicate attention on our part to present before this extracontinental contingent our material aspect together with our intellectually inspiring papers.

It is not only to the foreign botanist that such an exhibit would be valuable but particularly also to those misguided fellow-citizens in science who are unable to get beyond the notions of their childhood about botanical methods and still believe that the botanist is a man who analyses flowers and busies himself principally with the beauties and incidentally with the sterner realities of Nature. My old friends the "biologists," whom I have often had occasion to reprove more in sorrow than in anger, will be benefited, I know, by such an exhibit and it might in some degree compensate them for the absence in the future from their sectional meetings of the refining, broadening and inspiring influence of the botanists.

And even the leaders of the zoological wing might be afforded some information that would be of value to them by such an exhibit. I

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<sup>1</sup>ROBINSON, B. L. — Descriptions of new plants collected in Mexico by C. G. Pringle, in 1890 and 1891, with notes upon a few other species. [Reprinted from Proc. Am. Acad. 27. pp. 165-185.].

have in mind the unfortunate wording of the *Programme of Courses in Biology* at the University of Chicago which has recently come under my eye. In it I discover a classification of the biological sciences that is, as I have characterized it, unfortunate, for it comes under the supervision of a very able zoologist and consequently from a region whence we might have looked for better things. Under the head of "organization of the school" six departments are mentioned. These are: 1, zoology; 2, anatomy; 3, neurology; 4, palaeontology; 5, physiology; 6, botany. From such a classification it is plain that the position of botany in a *true* classification is not apprehended. The erroneous use of the word botany in such a connection is no less remarkable than the erroneous use of the word zoology as exclusive of anatomy, for example. But this will hardly palliate the offence against accurate use of terms in the setting off of botany as coördinate with palaeontology or neurology, and such parallelism is clearly indicated in the grouping used in the circular before me. It is a matter of regret to us all that in an institution of so much promise as the new Chicago University there should be so evidently retrogressive a movement. While over the world and here at home in our Association there is seen going on the segregation of the different branches of biological science and the accurate limiting of their fields, this classification of the Chicago programme is a movement backward to the old natural-history group (though under another name); and even in this group there is what a humble botanical worker with no pretensions to the name of biologist must be permitted to say is contrary to what he has been taught is an exact use of words, and certainly opposed to what he has been led to believe by study and reading and observation to be a correct classification of science-groups.

If a display of the material side would have any effect upon the minds of these wanderers from the philological fold, I suggest that the botanists present it, for their science, at Madison in 1893.—CONWAY MACMILLAN, *University of Minnesota*.

#### **An International Botanical Congress.**

Since the meeting of the botanists at Rochester last August it has become evident that an international botanical congress should be held in 1893 in this country. Upon the return of Professor Underwood from Genoa, with his report of what was done there, as well as of what was left undone, such a congress seemed a necessity, especially when it was learned that the delegates to the Genoa congress expected one to be held in America this year in order to complete the work left by them. The Columbian Exposition will doubtless bring many botanists to this country during the year. Most of these will attend our scientific meetings if possible, and it seems wise to take advantage of this and to arrange for a formal congress. There being no committee to take charge of the work of preparing for the congress, after consultation with a number of botanists, it was thought advisable that the chairman of the Section of Botany of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the president of the Botanical Club, Dr. Wilson, should appoint a committee to take the matter in hand. Accordingly on Dec. 9th, notices were sent to the following gentlemen